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ABSTRACT

Important considerations in planning a junior college reading program are presented. The need for a flexible reading program to meet the varied reading abilities of junior college students is emphasized, and the selection of an experienced, well-prepared reading instructor is seen as being vital to a sound program. Extensive study in the psychology of reading, diagnosis and remediation, counseling, testing and evaluation; practical experience teaching reading; and knowledge of reading research are listed as basic requirements for a junior college reading instructor. An abundance of materials designed to meet individual needs is also a basic necessity. Critical reading and teaching strategies are outlined and discussed. Flexible reading skills, vocabulary improvement, and directed reading lessons are seen as contributing to reading comprehension. References are included. (This document previously announced as ED 027 160.) (RT)

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HIGHLIGHTS OF THE 1967 PRE-CONVENTION INSTITUTES

Paul C. Berg
and
John E. George
Editors

JUNIOR COLLEGE READING PROGRAMS

Horst G. Taschow
Chairman of the Institute

INTERNATIONAL READING ASSOCIATION

Newark, Delaware

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FOREWORD

The Twelfth Annual Convention of the International Reading Association met in Seattle, Washington, May 2-6, 1967. The first two days were devoted to a series of institutes dealing with specific areas in the field of reading.

The following Institutes were held:

I. Bold Action Programs for the Disadvantaged: Elementary Reading
Chairman: Gertrude Whipple
Detroit Public Schools

II. Current Administrative Problems in Reading
Chairman: Thorsten R. Carlson
Sonoma Park College

III. Reading and Concept Attainment
Chairman: Russell G. Stauffer
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IV. Junior College Reading Programs
Chairman: Horst G. Taschow
Central Oregon College

V. Interdisciplinary Approach to Reading Disabilities
Chairman: Gilbert Schiffman
Maryland Public Schools

VI. In-Service Programs in Reading
Chairman: Dwane Russell
East Texas Center for Educational Services

The sessions represented by these papers attempted to examine in depth the thought and practice that currently prevails in these specialized areas. It is hoped that the reader will gain at least in small measure some of the inspiration and motivation that were produced by the sessions themselves.

Paul Conrad Berg
General Chairman

The International Reading Association attempts, through its publications, to provide a forum for a wide spectrum of opinion on reading. This policy permits divergent viewpoints without assuming the endorsement of the Association.

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TEACHER PREPARATION OF THE JUNIOR COLLEGE READING TEACHER

Uberto Price
and
Kay Wolfe
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THE NEED for reading instruction at the college level has received increasing attention during the past few years. Among other skills, college students must possess skills in reading which enable them to work effectively individually and independently or semi-independently. The material encountered in textbooks is more difficult and more varied than that found in high school books. Also, the body of knowledge in almost every area is increasing at an astounding rate. For the student to work successfully with this material, he must not only have developed the ability to comprehend, organize, and evaluate but he must extend these skills; and the degree to which he will work successfully will, to a large extent, be determined by the functional level of these and other reading abilities. It is rather universally recognized that students learn more quickly and more effectively under direct guidance. For these and other reasons, reading instruction is no longer considered to be exclusively within the domain of the elementary and high schools. It is also becoming more accepted that the college reading program should include developmental as well as remedial reading courses. Old demands in reading have lingered while new challenges in reading have been imposed on college pupils.

In recent years, the demands or requests from junior college administrators for reading teachers have increased manyfold indicating increased sensitiveness to the acuteness of this need. Thus the responsibility for teacher preparation in this field has been placed on institutions of higher learning which have facilities and staff for the preparation of junior college personnel.

This need for reading teachers has existed for some time but has increased considerably because gradual changes have taken place in the junior colleges. First, the number of junior colleges has increased. According to the 1966 Junior College Directory, over one-hundred public junior colleges have been established since 1958. Secondly, the number of persons attending institutions of higher learning has increased. The crowded conditions of senior colleges and universities have forced these institutions to adopt more

selective admission policies. Thus, the junior college has become one of the favored routes of entrance to the senior colleges and universities. Junior colleges are now serving approximately 1.3 million students. The third change in the junior college is that the "open door" policy is becoming more prevalent. This plan offers educational opportunities to an individual according to his needs and abilities. The curriculums are varied and may include, among others, college parallel, vocational training, technical training, and adult education. Such a program will attract a student body with a wide range of aspirations, capabilities, and achievement. The junior college has realized the importance of meeting as many of the varied needs of as large a number of these students as possible, including needs in reading. Finally, the demands for junior college reading teachers have increased because it has become more accepted that student success is closely related to efficient reading.

These changes in the junior colleges indicate that the colleges have an obligation to the good, the average, and the poor reader. The reading needs of pupils may at least in part be reflected by institutional admission requirements, philosophy, policy, and objectives. For example, those institutions with an "open door" policy may have a greater need for remedial courses than will those with highly selective admission policies. The difference between the demands on a high school student and the demands made by the college is strong support for developmental reading in the junior college.

The reading teacher must be able to cope with the diverse needs of these students. The teaching of reading in the junior college requires a great deal of versatility on the part of the teacher. This versatility can be best and most effectively achieved through specific preparation in teaching reading at the college level.

The Present Situation

At the present time, based on needs and demands, colleges and universitites are preparing an insignificant number of persons to teach reading at the junior college level. In a questionnaire sent to thirty-eight institutions offering the doctorates in education, only two institutions answered that they had a program designed specifically to prepare junior college teachers of reading.

These meager opportunities for preparation in this field are not meeting the demands for college teachers of reading. A questionnaire was sent to 396 junior colleges throughout the country to determine the types of reading programs in these colleges. The responses of 111 public and private junior colleges which do not have reading programs indicate that a lack of qualified personnel to teach courses is a

major reason that reading is not taught. About half of these institutions have plans to offer reading courses to their students. Of the 110 junior colleges responding that they do offer reading courses, only five percent felt that the reading program would not warrant hiring a teacher especially prepared to teach reading in the junior college.

These junior colleges are being forced to recruit teachers from the elementary and secondary schools. At Appalachian State Teachers College, the requests for junior college teachers of reading increased thirty percent from 1964-65 to 1965-66. Sometimes a college, not being fortunate enough to get a teacher with any professional preparation in reading is required to obtain teachers from other disciplines to assume the responsibility for the reading program. There have also been situations in which persons outside the teaching profession have been hired to teach reading courses.

A Proposal

Urgency and demand for reading personnel should not weaken the thoroughness and care in the selection of the prospective teachers. The selection of junior college reading teachers should be made with great care and early in the college life of the students so that careful attention can be given to planning and developing a program for them. Among the many qualities, four personal ones should be considered: 1) the prospective reading teacher must display personal attributes which contribute to the making of a "good teacher"; 2) it is almost superfluous to say that he must have a genuine regard for students; 3) since the reading teacher will encounter students with a wide range of abilities and achievement, he must be flexible and creative; and 4) the reading teacher will be involved with administration and faculty so he should possess qualities of leadership and be able to work well with people.

At this screening level, the intelligence and scholarly qualities of the individual should be considered. He must be capable of mastery and application of the skills and techniques presented on a graduate level. The prospective teacher should have a strong desire for professional growth in the field of reading. Because new materials, machines, and teaching methods are introduced so frequently, he must realize that a good reading teacher never stops learning.

Finally, the junior college reading teacher must be a good reader. He should possess a reasonable command of all the skills which he expects to teach to his students. Not only should he be a good reader but he should be an extensive reader.

The reading teacher's general education should be broad in

scope, representing a variety of fields. This curriculum should include literature, social studies, sciences, and the arts. As a part of his general preparation, the teacher should be well informed about and have an abiding interest in current events. This is not an inferior education; it is a broad education. Such a curriculum acquaints the individual with general areas of knowledge and helps him become a more interesting person. It provides a background for the versatility which will be so valuable and needed in the junior college reading situation.

As the individual moves to more advanced work, he should become familiar with the junior college as an institution. His course work should include study of the nature and philosophy of the junior college. He should be aware of the purposes and objectives of junior colleges as well as the nature of the students so that his specific training in reading can be oriented toward this particular type of institution.

The prospective teacher should receive training in psychology, guidance, and testing and measurement. These courses should enable him to administer instruments of measurement, interpret test results, and understand and engage in experimental research.

The junior college teacher of reading should have knowledge of the nature of the reading process and the teaching of reading at all levels with intensive preparation in the teaching of reading at the junior college level. He should have basic knowledge and understandings in the foundations of reading and the psychology of reading. When the specific reading preparation is begun, the individual should become familiar with source books, journals, and yearbooks available in reading, and he should begin to make extensive use of these materials.

Specific reading preparation should include not only a study of basic skills but also higher level reading skills. Among others, this preparation should involve developing study skills, including specific study methods such as SQ3R and note-taking techniques.

The junior college reading teacher should have instruction in reading in the content areas, a course designed specifically for the junior college level. Since many students in the junior college may be on vocational or technical curriculums, the teacher must be familiar with these areas. To some, this requirement may seem to be an overwhelming undertaking, but these vocational students may be the ones who require a great deal of help in reading. They need not only general reading instruction but also specific help in reading technical materials.

The teacher preparation program should include training in the diagnosis of reading problems and the remediation of these difficulties. This work involves a knowledge of diagnostic and achievement tests in reading as well as remedial approaches and techniques. The good reader, however, should not be ignored. Attention should be given to developing and extending the skills of this group of students.

A wide variety of materials should be available for study and evaluation. First, the teachers should be familiar with materials used in the content areas, that is, the textbooks, manuals, and related materials. Teachers should be able to use specific reading materials, including commercially prepared aids, textbooks, and workbooks, and must have a knowledge of mechanical devices in order to make a critical judgment as to the merit and purpose of a particular machine. An area not to be overlooked is that of teacher-prepared materials. Instruction and practice should be given in designing materials for specific purposes.

Since many junior college reading teachers will be responsible for organizing the reading program, the graduate curriculum should include training in this area. Some of the characteristics of a good junior college reading program are 1) provisions are made to develop and extend the basic skills; 2) it provides for teaching skills in the specific content areas; 3) it provides instruction for the good, average, and poor reader; and 4) the program is continuously evaluated.

The prospective teacher should be able to incorporate all facets of a well-balanced reading program into a workable plan for a junior college.

How can this program of study be most effective? Durrell states that the essential principles of education need to be taught at the time the problems arise. Learn first; apply later. Approach has little or no place in teacher preparation. It is proposed, therefore, that during the graduate training, the prospective teachers become gradually involved with students.

Thus every teacher-preparing institution must have facilities for this involvement. There should be a laboratory on campus where graduate students can observe and get early experience in teaching reading. The facilities of a junior college should be easily accessible to provide opportunities for teaching reading at that level.

The graduate training should begin with study and observation. The prospective teacher has the opportunity to observe an experienced teacher, to ask questions, and to have those questions answered or at least discussed. Later the individual begins to participate in the classroom situation. The involve-

ment is steadily increased until at the end of the second year of graduate training the divisions may be approximately one-half time given to study and one-half time, to supervised practice.

This laboratory approach should include lesson planning, discussions, conferences, and seminars involving the prospective teachers and their supervisors. There should be opportunity for students and faculty to discuss ideas they have encountered in professional literature or in practice.

This proposal is really characteristic of any good program of preparation for reading teachers. The only difference is that it is aimed toward preparing teachers for a specific situation--the teaching of reading in the junior college.

Summary

The suggestions presented in this paper are based on the following premises:

1. Poor readers can profit from instruction, and even the best readers can become more efficient readers.
2. There is a need for college teachers of reading.
3. These teachers of reading need specific preparation including extensive study in the psychology of reading, diagnosis and remediation of reading disabilities, counseling, testing and evaluation, familiarity with materials, basic principles underlying a sound, coordinated reading program, a knowledge of research, and supervised practice.
4. There needs to be a period of preparation of no less than five years and preferably six. The prospective teacher should gradually become involved with students until, at the end of the second year, approximately one-half time is given to study and one-half time, to supervised practice.

These suggestions present two challenges. First, there is a challenge to teacher-preparing institutions to give attention to the preparation of junior college teachers of reading. The second challenge is to junior colleges to seek well-prepared teachers of reading.

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PLANNING A JUNIOR COLLEGE READING PROGRAM

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A DISCUSSION of reading programs for junior colleges at this time is both opportune and necessary. Junior college administrators and instructors are recognizing that most of their students are sorely in need of reading instruction. According to different surveys, those schools which do not have reading programs are contemplating developing such.

Some few junior colleges, however, have abandoned their reading programs because "the students did not benefit from the instruction." Some of the so-called reading programs conducted during the past year testify that such action probably was justified. Those junior colleges that abandoned their programs might better have considered reorganizing or supplementing their programs with realistic, workable reading programs.

One might ask, "Why were the programs discontinued? Why didn't they produce results?" No doubt there are numerous reasons the programs were discontinued, but there are two major reasons that reading programs fail: 1) they have not been planned to meet the needs of students and 2) the instructors were inadequately prepared to teach reading.

Suggestions for Planning a Junior College Reading Program

The planning and development of an effective junior college reading program must be based upon sound educational and psychological principles, derived from available research evidence.

Although much of the reported research in reading is contradictory and oftentimes questionable, there is sufficient evidence to provide direction and techniques for the junior college reading program. The instructor in charge of a reading program should be an efficient critical reader with adequate preparation and experience to select valid research for his purposes. He should quickly detect and reject those loosely controlled, biased accounts that masquerade as valid research and trip the unwary reader.

Planning the Program Takes Time

A reading program cannot be developed overnight. The idea that a reading program is needed may be born during an evening

or between sips of coffee, but a workable plan must be nurtured and evolved over a period of time.

Two of the most important ingredients for planning and directing a reading program are the availability of a competent, well-prepared instructor, or staff, and an administration that believes in the need for such a program. Another important ingredient is the services of a reading consultant who is qualified to give advice and suggestions to both the teaching staff and administration.

The consultant should be available to the reading instructor when advice is needed. Some of the consultant's contributions might include demonstrating techniques of teaching reading in subject matter areas; providing information about sources of materials; and helping to inform the regular staff, parents, and students about the goals and the working procedures of the program.

The consultant may also contribute to the instructional program by questioning and evaluating suggested techniques of teaching and procedures of administering the program. He may prevent the teaching staff from being stampeded into an unsound program simply because it is a new innovation or because a similar program is in operation at another institution. Yet he must not be so hidebound that he rejects all suggestions from subject matter teachers because they have never had courses in the teaching of reading.

Subject matter teachers often contribute worthy ideas for improving the teaching of reading in content areas but lack the experience for implementing their suggestions. The reading consultant's contribution in such instances becomes twofold: 1) he takes the undeveloped ideas and shapes them into workable interrelated parts of the total program; and 2) he converts these subject matter teachers into active supporters of the reading program and eventually has them using reading techniques to improve the teaching in their own content areas.

Major Objectives of a Junior College Reading Program

Two broad goals which are basic to any reading program and which chart the general direction of the program are 1) providing each student with the kinds of instruction and experiences that will enable him to become a mature independent reader who can learn what he needs to learn through reading and 2) making the reading process so challenging and stimulating that he not only learns through reading but that he also learns to love reading.

Specific Objectives. Specific objectives of the program should be written in simple, direct language that is easily understood by both instructors and students. Such objectives must be based upon each student's needs, too numerous or

diverse to list in any one paper.

Fortunately, research and practical experience provide evidence that certain basic skills are prerequisite to reading subject matter. Many of these basic reading skills have not been mastered by junior college students and may serve as a minimal list of specific objectives. In order that students will not experience extreme difficulty or failure in learning subject matter, they should have the following skills:

1. An adequate sight-vocabulary of the most common words in English;
2. Word recognition and pronunciation skills;
3. The ability to use a dictionary independently;
4. The ability to follow written and oral directions;
5. An understanding of the meaning of a large number of vocabulary words;
6. The ability to get literal meaning from what is read;
7. The ability to mentally organize what has been read so that recall of information is possible;
8. Some knowledge of the necessity for varying their rate of reading according to the kinds of materials that are being read and the purposes for such reading;
9. Some ability in setting purposes for reading;
10. The ability to use the index, table of contents, glossary, and the author's clues for meaningful reading;
11. A knowledge of when to use additional references; and
12. The ability to use the library and its reference materials (1:84-85).

In addition to the previous list of minimal skills, many of the students will, for example, need help in developing and refining their ability to use study skills for learning subject matter, to follow more complex oral and written directions, to learn how to skim and when to skim materials for specific purposes, to read for main ideas, to summarize and organize materials they have read, and to continually adjust their reading rates in light of new and different purposes for reading.

The instructor must also be aware that some of the students will have mastered the previously mentioned skills and now need supervised practice in learning to read critically.

Briefly, the preceding are some of the needs of students who will be enrolled in the reading classes at the junior college level. These needs provide the bases for specific goals that

give direction and impetus to the reading program.

Selection of a Reading Instructor

It is axiomatic that no program is any better than those who teach it. One of the major weaknesses of an inefficient junior college reading program is that of inadequately prepared teachers. The instructor of reading, therefore, should be no less than a reading specialist. Briefly, he should be 1) an experienced classroom teacher, 2) specially prepared in the field of reading, 3) able to meet the "Minimum Standards for Professional Training of Reading Specialists" proposed by the International Reading Association's Committee on Professional Standards, and 4) dedicated to the task of helping all people become better readers.

A reading specialist is no ordinary individual. He has the preparation, characteristics, and attitudes necessary for working with severely retarded readers, corrective and developmental readers, subject matter teachers, and administrators.

Determining Procedure for a Junior College Reading Program

When planning a reading program, it is both prudent and necessary that details of procedure be agreed upon by those in charge of the teaching and the administration. Once agreement has been reached, the plan should be written down and followed. This rule does not mean that a program once agree upon becomes an inflexible master incapable of being changed and revised. Such action provides stability to the program and keeps it on course, thereby preventing another casualty--a program that is abandoned because "the students did not benefit from the instruction."

It is not always a simple task for reading specialists, administrators, and teachers to reach agreement about many details of procedure necessary for an adequate reading program. The difficulty is not due to lack of amity among the discussants but rather to their differences in preparation and experiences with reading. Therefore, once a program has been developed and approved, efficient operation is fostered by having a written record of certain vital details such as budget allowances, sufficient space for teaching, ample amounts of materials, specific criteria for the selection of students, and procedures for continual, objective appraisal for the purpose of improving instruction.

Changes must be made in the best of programs if improvement in instruction is achieved. With minor exceptions, however, only minimal necessary changes should be made before the program has had time to prove its effectiveness.

Selection of Students

The selection of students will vary among different junior colleges according to the kinds of students that are enrolled and the purposes of the institutions. A few junior colleges are primarily "prep" schools for certain universities and colleges and cater to transfer students. The majority of two-year colleges, however, admit anyone who wishes to continue his education. Some of the students will transfer to regular universitites and colleges; some will be terminal, and some will return year after year for an occasional course. Selection of students for reading help will, therefore, depend greatly upon the makeup of the student body. Whatever the bases for selection, the reading specialist should be the final authority in the matter of selection since hs is the one who is responsible for the reading instruction.

Materials

There should be no compromise about an abundent supply of necessary reading materials covering many areas of interest and varying levels of difficulty. The ever-growing number of excellent paperbacks permits an ample supply of interesting materials at comparatively low cost.

Since many students in the program will be terminal, every effort should be made to encourage them to buy inexpensive books of their own. Experience shows that many a reluctant reader has developed a keen interest in reading after he has had an opportunity to buy paperback books that are written about topics in which he is interested.

Newspapers and magazines are a must when ordering materials. We know that the majority of adults limit their reading to newspapers and magazines, but few know how to read these materials for the information they are seeking. They are often delimited in reading informative and worthwhile magazine articles because they are unaware that such articles exist, that the articles are of value to them, or that they are capable of reading these kinds of materials.

Evaluation and Diagnosis

Succinct plans for the evaluation and diagnosis of each individual should be written and followed. Evaluation should reveal the student's strengths and weaknesses to both the instructor and the student. The student should be aware of and understand the results of his tests, what the results indicate, and how such information may be used to help him. Many times he may reveal further pertinent information to the examiner when the results are discussed with him.

The student benefits most from appraisal when evaluation is continuous. Both standardized and informal tests reveal

and measure specific aspects of reading, but evaluation should not be limited to testing. It should include teacher observation, pupil self-evaluation, anecdotal records, and samples of the student's work.

Whenever possible, plans for an interdisciplinary approach to evaluation and therapy should be made. Medical doctors, ministers, social workers, and counselors are representative of some of the professional people who may be of great value in helping the reading teacher in his task of aiding the inefficient reader. At this time, educators are only in the initial stage of interdisciplinary therapy and diagnosis in reading. Further information about the interdisciplinary approach may be found in the 1965 and 1966 IRA Proceedings.

Summary

This report has been limited to eight areas that are pertinent to planning a junior college reading program. Although other important areas were not mentioned, those that were discussed may provide a nucleus for the planning of such programs.

It cannot be overemphasized that with the help of a reading consultant, time spend by a school staff in the planning of a reading program is time wisely invested. Such planning will provide specific, measurable objectives to serve as guideposts and stimulators for the successful progress of a junior college reading program.

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PROMOTING CRITICAL READING AT THE JUNIOR COLLEGE LEVEL

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DURING THE PAST several years various authorities in reading have attempted to define critical reading and to delineate the most important elements of the process. Needless to say, there are both consensus and diversity in their opinions.

Note first that there is general consensus about certain aspects of critical reading. For example, critical reading is an integral part of the total reading process; a critical reader not only understands the ideas presented by the author but also interprets and draws inferences from the content; a critical reader makes judgments about the material, the language, and the author; and, as Artley indicates, "reconstructs from the printed page the writer's ideas, feelings, moods, and sensory impressions" (2).

Sochor has indicated that no matter how critical reading is defined, it invariably includes both the facts presented in the selection and the use of high mental processes; that "to understand the nature of critical reading, one must understand the nature of thinking in general and possibly critical thinking" (15).

If critical reading is, in fact, reading and thinking critically, then one must be concerned about "critical thinking," how it is defined, what skills are important in its development, and so on.

At least two authors define critical reading and thinking as a process of formal logic and problem-solving. They recognize the language function but stress formal reasoning. A definition of critical reading cited by Bruner falls in the foregoing category. He states, "Critical reading is not the same as reading fluency. It is, instead, something like the ability to see the connotations of sentences. The critical reader gets beyond the material literally referred to and perceives that the sentence is relevant to a larger domain. My assumption is that the parallel between critical reading and formal reasoning is very close. The literal contents of sentences are premises; the connotations are the conclusions" (3:169-70).

Robert Ennis defines critical thinking in somewhat the same manner by stating that "critical thinking may be construed as the correct assessing of statements." Ennis further indicates

that there are three basic divisions of critical thinking: "the logical dimension, the critical dimension, and the pragmatic dimension" (9).

Other authors define critical reading or thinking primarily as a language function. They do not omit the logical dimension but simply stress the language aspects. Richard Altick's Preface to Critical Reading (1) is an example of this position.

A third position is reflected by various educators writing in the field. Certain reading authorities recognize both the logical dimension of critical thinking and the function of language but go beyond either of these to a consideration of the reader himself. They have recognized that critical thinking involves not only the evaluation and judging of the author, language, and content but also includes an evaluation of the reader himself and the attitudes, purposes, and background which affect his ability to think critically. Crossen (5), Eller and Wolf (8), and others have provided evidence that personal or intense feelings on the part of a reader may be a major source of uncriticalness. Thus it appears desirable to include in any definition of critical thinking and reading some consideration of the reader himself.

Such a consideration has been provided by Ethel Maw. She has written, "Critical thinking skills include examining carefully the facts and ideas presented, recognizing and defining problems, selecting pertinent information, evaluating sources of evidence or opinion, recognizing unstated assumptions, forming and evaluating hypotheses, making valid generalizations and inferences, determining cause and effect, evaluating arguments, and understanding one's own predilections and prejudices" (11).

The definitions of critical thinking, as reported, overlap one another considerably. The major differences among them are a matter of emphasis. Where as one author devotes more attention to formal deductive and inductive reasoning processes and the analysis of the content of the text, others may concentrate upon the analysis of language, the author's use of mood and tone, and the denotation and connotation of words.

To arrive at a comprehensive definition of critical reading involves the consideration of several interrelated factors. When one speaks of critical reading, it is quite difficult to be precise, to know which skills and processes are being included but it is helpful to think of critical reading as involving 1) the ability to comprehend literally and in depth the content of the material; 2) a willingness and the ability to suspend judgment until the evidence warrants a conclusion; and 3) the ability to apply reason and criteria in the selection, evaluation, and interpretation of the language and evidence used in making a judgment and in reaching a conclusion.

Critical Reading: Some Essential Skills

While definitions may, in a very real sense, be useful in helping educators determine the purposes and goals of a reading program, they are frequently high-order abstractions which must, if they are to be useful, be supplemented with a listing of the individual skills implied in the definition. Therefore, if one is to help students develop the ability to read critically, the specific skills inherent in the critical reading process must be identified and organized into some framework whereby they may be taught.

Spache (16), Smith (14), Ennis (9), Heilman (10), and others have identified and listed many of the more important critical reading skills, but probably the most elaborate and extensive list of the separate critical reading skills is that compiled by Crossen. She lists forty-nine critical reading skills in the following four categories: "(1) getting the meaning of words and phrases, (2) seeing relationships, (3) making evaluations of the material read, and (4) drawing conclusions from the material read" (5).

A second, less extensive list has been provided by Williams (18). She did not group her thirty-three separate skills under any particular headings; however, three categories appear: 1) skills necessary for gaining an initial understanding of the passage; 2) skills which employ the application of critical thinking; and 3) skills necessary for drawing conclusions.

A survey of the professional literature in the field of reading has suggested that the several different critical reading skills are related to one or more of about four basic activities in which the mature reader may engage. These four fundamental activities and some of the more essential critical reading skills related to each are as follows:

1. Skills a critical reader utilizes in evaluating and judging his own purposes, attitudes, and background.

    a. He determines his purpose for reading in order to adjust his reading behavior to the content being read;

    b. He recognizes and takes into account his own attitudes, values, prejudices, and biases in order that he may be as objective as possible;

    c. He recognizes the extent of his own background of experience and how this matter may enhance or limit his effectiveness and understanding of material; and

    d. He seeks continually to broaden his background and improve his reading skills.

2. Skills a critical reader utilizes in evaluating and judging the author and publisher.

   a. He determines the author's purpose for writing;

   b. He is aware of the author's point of view, biases, slants and prejudices;

   c. He attempts to determine the author's background of experience and the adequacy of his knowledge in the field in which he is writing; and

   d. He attempts to determine when an author acquired his experience and its relation to the publication of the material.

3. Skills a critical reader utilizes in evaluating and judging the language of the text.

   a. He recognizes that a word may have many meanings and therefore, seeks to select the particular meaning that applies to the context;

   b. He recognizes and adjusts to figures of speech, metaphors, and cliches;

   c. He looks for rhetorical swaying and false allusions;

   d. He notes sentence length and the position of words in sentences and sentences in paragraphs; and

   e. He recognizes and adjusts to the mood and tone of the text.

4. Skills a critical reader utilizes in evaluating and judging the content of the text.

   a. He attempts to distinguish between fact and opinion and between primary and secondary sources of information;

   b. He recognizes the organizational pattern of a selection, identifies main ideas, and notes significant details;

   c. He attempts to identify the techniques and content of propaganda; and

   d. He brings logical support to the judgments he reaches in evaluating the content of a selection.

Critical Reading: Some Suggested Teaching Strategies

In the institutions of higher education are a fair share of what Francis Chase has designated the "higher illiterate" (4), the student who can absorb and repeat ideas found on the printed page but who has not developed the ability to relate these ideas to the life around him. The higher illiterate does not raise the sharp questions which probe the content of reading for meaning, test it for accuracy and penetration, or weigh its implications for himself and society. He cannot entertain ideas which are at variance with his preconceptions. In short, for him reading is not an invitation to reflective thought. Fortunately, there are several instructional strategies at disposal which can be utilized to help students grow into mature critical readers.

The first of these strategies is related to teachers, themselves, at their own levels of commitment. If teachers demonstrate to students through the types of questions asked that the main concern is simply having information recalled, students will learn to read and memorize the material so that they can demonstrate their proficiency at this task. Students, by and large, attempt to fulfill the expectations educators hold; thus, if educators are satisfied with having students read, memorize, and recall data, this activity is precisely what they will try to accomplish.

The first task, then, is for instructors to ask the kinds of questions which motivate and challenge students to do more than read and recall information. Questions must be asked which force students to analyze and evaluate information in addition to remembering it.

As an example of the questions teachers should be asking, consider these used after students had read an assignment:

1. Are the authors qualified to write on this subject? Are they likely to be biased? What does the article reveal about the authors' scholarship?
2. Is the information in the article accurate? Does it agree or disagree with other data you can find on the topic? Have the authors reached the same conclusions as the researchers who conducted the studies?
3. Are the assumptions, premises, criteria, and conclusions of the article subject to questions or controversy? What other positions are taken on the same issues?
4. Is the logic of the article sound? Are the main conclusions reached inductively or deductively? Did the authors misuse either process? Did you find the use of logical fallacies?

5. What learning theories underly basic assumptions stated or implied in the article?

6. Have the authors chosen their terms carefully or have they colored their reviews by the use of certain language, all-none statements, etc.?

7. Can you adequately analyze or evaluate the article on the basis of the information you now have or should you seek additional data?

The second strategy for improving critical reading is related to language. Teaching vocabulary and the meanings of words is very likely one of the more difficult but crucial tasks undertaken by reading teachers. A reader may experience difficulty with language through ignorance of syntax; however, the chief misunderstandings appear to stem from ignorance of the kinds of meaning that language conveys. The task, then, is to help students recognize that meanings are often quite complex; that meanings, like the English language itself, are in a state of constant change; and that meanings may convey both information and attitudes.

The problem of the complex meanings of terms in a familiar one. The English language contains large numbers of words that shift their meanings from one referent to another in various contexts. The term slip is a good example of such a word. A slip may be a cutting from a plant, a note, a young and slender person (a stripling), clay in a liquid state, a child's pinafore or frock; or slip may mean to move as if sliding or gliding, to escape without being observed, to excape one's memory, to slide out of place, to decline slightly, to deteriorate, to elude; or a slip can be a berth on a ship.

The problem of the changing meanings of words is an obvious one. Both denotations and connotations change. For example, the current meaning generally assigned to pudding is comparatively modern. The older sense appears in "black pudding," a sausage made of pig's blood.

Meanings convey both information and attitudes. Saying of a kindergarten student, "She is a child," is much different from saying the same thing of a grown woman. In the first instance, information is being conveyed; the second conveys primarily an attitude.

Another example of how word meanings convey attitude lies in the following paragraph taken from the student's newspaper of a large university where students had been trying unsuccessfully to gain admittance to faculty meetings:

> As far as we know, faculty meetings at the University have been closed to the press, and to the public in general, since the University

> was created. We have tried time and time again to gain access to these clandestine gatherings, but our requests have met with only sternfaced opposition.

Could the writer's use of clandestine portray his attitude that faculty meetings are evil or for illicit purposes?

Certain literary techniques are also used to convey mental images which tend to carry additudinal or emotional overtones. Note from the following quotation how Max Rafferty has used allusions and metaphors to convey his attitudes and feelings.

> Nothing was taken too seriously. Nothing was allowed to disturb our composure. Above all, no hint of coming austerity or sacrifice was suffered to ripple even for a moment the brimming pool of full prosperity.
>
> In short, we were strutting, free-wheeling specimens on a grand scale of what the old Greeks used to call hubris, that fatal pride in one's own excellence which in classical times used to call for immediate chastisement with one of Jove's more lethal thunderbolts. To mix metaphors, our necks were out and we were riding for a fall.
>
> Into this smug smog of perfumed complacency has driven like a stiff breeze from the north the recent startling achievements of Soviet science. In glistening silver letters traced across the sky for all to see, the Russian satellites and moon rockets have written Finis to our dream of a monopoly of know-how. The time is obviously here for a girding of loins and a measured marshalling of our resources in preparation for a technological marathon which may last a hundred years (13:118-25).

The foregoing examples make it clear that the second strategy must be focused upon helping students develop a sensitivity to the denotations and connotations of words; understand language patterns; recognize metaphors, analogies, and cliches; perceive how words and phrases are related to their antecedents; and understand the relationships of phrases to sentences, sentences to paragraphs, and paragraphs to the total organization of the text. How can educators best develop this sensitivity? There is some evidence that requiring students to write on many different topics and having them present papers in which they defend or justify a point of view or position may be as effective

as anything else. Students can also engage in the following activities:

1. Compare the advertising claims of competitive products.
2. Compare different versions of the same event in newspapers, magazines, etc.
3. Compare biographies of famous people with the fictionalized account.
4. Compare a straight news story of an event or issue with editorial or columnists' accounts.
5. Read news stories, poems, etc., and attempt to identify the general mood or tone the author was trying to convey.
6. Identify emotion-producing terms in selections.
7. Compare accounts of historical events which were written at the time of the occurence with others written later.
8. Identify the number of words the author uses which carry possitive connotation with the number he uses which reflect negative connotation.

The third strategy for teaching critical reading is related to the analysis and evaluation of the content of a passage or text. Students must first be taught to make what is perhaps a basic evaluation--that of determining if the facts presented are true, deciding whether the treatment of a topic is complete, judging which information presented by the author is most significant, evaluating the logic of the author's conclusions, as well as making several other judgments.

Probably the most difficult elements of content analysis to teach are those aspects related to assessing the logic of the author's presentation. Accurate, clearly stated information provides the basis for making sound judgments but does not assure sound decision making. Only effective, accurate thinking about the data assures this skill. Thus the critical reader must have some familiarity with the processes of both deductive and inductive reasoning, not only for evaluating the author's reasoning but for analyzing his own thought processes. This criterion is not to suggest that junior college reading courses should become courses in formal logic but rather that reading instructors should help students apply the principles of deductive and inductive thought to their reading.

Deductive reasoning is the concern of most formal logic books. A deductive argument is normally composed of elements

known as propositions stated in a certain fashion. Propositions may be either true or false and are used as the evidence or premises for a conclusion. In accurate deductive reasoning, the conclusion is said to follow from the premises. Propositions are commonly divided into four classes: 1) particular affirmative--some students can read well; 2) particular negative--some students can't read; 3) universal affirmative--all teachers are educated; and 4) universal negative--no child misbehaves.

Students, and adults as well, often fail to distinguish among the foregoing classes of propsitions and thus cause errors in reasoning. For example, a student may read a report of research in which the author states that in experimental classroom A (which included only second grade youngsters) phonics program X was the cause of superior reading achievement. "Well," thinks the reader, "if phonics program X was instrumental in developing superior readers in classroom A, it will therefore enable all children to read better." The reader's conclusion based upon immediate inference may be true. In the foregoing relationship in which the truth of the universal is dependent upon the truth of the particular, all that can be logically inferred is that if the particular is true, the universal is undetermined.

There are two types of deductive arguments, in particular, that students should be familiar with: the conditional--the if-then relationship and the disjunctive--the either-or argument.

The conditional argument starts with the premise that if certain conditions are satisfied, specific consequences will follow. The major source of error in evaluating conditional arguments is the failure to distinguish between necessary and sufficient conditions. To illustrate: If this student were uninterested in reading, he would be failing. He is failing. Therefore, the student is uninterested in reading. The major premise may be sufficient, but is not necessary for the consequences it implies.

The disjunctive argument starts with the premise that one or another of two possibilities must be correct. For example: His success in reading is due to high intelligence or good study habits. He has good study habits. Therefore, he is not highly intelligent. The foregoing example illustrates the chief difficulty of disjunctive arguments: starting with premises that do not really exhaust all of the possibilities.

In examining the deductive argument, then, the critical reader will question the acceptability of the premises and whether the reasoning is valid. If these can be answered in the affirmative, then at least the logic is acceptable.

Inductive reasoning takes two major forms. One has to do with the gathering of data in an attempt to draw a general conclusion from many bits of related evidence; the other concerns the setting up and testing of hypotheses.

The gathering of the data in order to reach a conclusion is almost a necessary condition of modern life and is carried on in one form or another by most, if not all, human beings. The young child learns that certain types of behavior are rewarded and others, punished. The mean little boy portrayed by Red Skelton was reasoning from particular instances in his experience when he mused to himself about an anticipated misdeed, "If I dood it, I get a whuppin! I dood it!"

The foregoing example illustrates not only how one commonly relies on experience and personal observations to provide him with the specific data upon which he generalizes but also portrays one of the major dangers related to inductive reasoning--the adequacy of the evidence.

When one generalizes from personal observations, he is often in danger of going further than he is really entitled to do. Generally speaking, the more evidence available, the more reliable are the conclusions; however, a simple accumulation of instances may not prove anything if only those instances favorable to a point of view are counted and those contradicting it, ignored. A basic requirement of a good sampling technique is that the sample represent all items in the population to be sampled. One is all too familiar with the failure of opinion polls to obtain random samples, a failure which often results in inaccurate and embarrasing results.

Another error commonly made in inductive reasoning is to assume a causal relationship between two events simply because one precedes another in time. Causes are often complex and different in their immediacy. What are the causes of reading failure? Some factors are "underlying" and others, more "immediate."

The discussion of causes leads to the consideration of the second general use of inductive reasoning--the setting up of hypotheses for the purposes of testing the truth. Hypotheses are encountered whenever and wherever observed data suggest a problem which requires a solution. Hypotheses vary all the way from simple guesses to elaborate and sophisticated theories. Thus a hypothesis is essentially a guess--man's ability to synthesize a group of given facts and to see the possibilities which will explain those facts.

Aside from inherent plausibility, simplicity is likely to be the hallmark of a good hypothesis. One can, for example, suppose that when a child takes out his reading text, he is going to dispose of it in the wastebasket; but it is simpler

to assume that it is time for reading instruction.

At best, inductive thought is the essence of scientific method; however, it must be remembered that often hypotheses and generalizations are assumed rather than proved.

College students must be helped to apply deductive and inductive thought processes to content evaluation of their reading materials. Suggested here are ways in which this skill can be aided by the reading courses:

1. Provide students with several statements and ask them to write a paragraph on each explaining the data they would require to be convinced the statement was true:
   a. Phonics is a crucial prerequisite to initial reading success.
   b. If a drowning man goes down for the third time, he is lost.
   c. Terror can turn one's hair white in a few hours.
   d. Television viewing by children has sharply increased the number of remedial reading problems.
2. Provide assertions based on some form of inductive thinking. Ask students to examine the statements to determine:
   a. If the terms are carefully and clearly defined.
   b. If the assertion is a hypothesis and if it allows for all possibilities, can it be tested.
   c. If the evidence justifies a generalization.
3. Ask students to analyze the soundness of reasoning in statements by determing:
   a. If the premises are true.
   b. If the conclusion necessarily follows from the premises.

There is currently an over-reliance and emphasis at all levels of education upon the prepackaged instructional program--the box or the machine-controlled sequence. These materials may be effective in certain areas (teaching content), but they seldom challenge students in the manner suggested.

When students are challenged to evaluate and judge the material they read and are provided the techniques for engag-

ing in these activities; when students are able to determine not only what the author is saying but why he is saying it, how he is trying to convey his message, and the logic of his assertions, only then are they on the way to becoming mature critical readers.

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A JUNIOR COLLEGE READING PROGRAM IN ACTION

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MOST FRESHMEN entering junior college are senior high school graduates whose academic ability levels range anywhere from grade seven to grade twelve. These facts speak for themselves. For a junior college reading program to be effective means that one must be prepared to meet the wide range of the students' reading and learning abilities. The way in which and the means by which this condition is met will ultimately determine the course of the reading actions to be taken within the quarter or semester period.

Junior college freshmen who choose to come to the college reading center usually want to comprehend more in less time, to find quickly ways and means to improve study habits, to increase scanty vocabulary repertoires, and to become "better spellers." Whatever is stated, outlined, and prescribed in any reading program is valid only to the extent to which the content serves the needs and purposes of the students who have chosen the reading course to improve themselves, whatever their reasons may be.

Among the different learning tasks stated earlier, one appears to be more ardently, more wishfully, and yet more fearfully anticipated than all other learning requirements. When a student says "How can I comprehend more?" or "I wish I could understand what I have to read," or "Make me read better!" no sincere-minded reading teacher can fail to get the student's message: he wishes to comprehend reading material more easily. For some students the road to comprehension is rugged and steep; but almost always a goal within their own capacities is reachable. Other students require assistance and guidance in varying degrees in order to accomplish temporary goals in their reading efforts toward comprehension. If reading is reasoning and thinking, then comprehension is the nucleus around which all other reading competencies circulate.

In the functional undertaking of teaching reading comprehension, reading aspects, skills, attitudes, and personal development are steadily interacting in a closely knit interrelationship denoting the "highly complex, purposeful thinking process engaged in by the entire organism while acquiring knowledge, evolving new ideas, solving problems, or relaxing and recuperating through the interpretation of printer symbols" (7).

The total complexity of the reading act contributing to

comprehension must be clearly recognized in order to perceive each detail, not as a separate entity in inself but as a contributing part of the whole.

Any reading aspect to be taught must, of course, depend entirely upon the need of the student who is engaged in the reading task. The first necessary step then in attempting to improve comprehension is to begin instruction at the student's instructional reading level.

Instructional Reading Levels

To determine the student's instructional reading level at which he can read and learn content materials, the writer administers the Nelson-Denny Reading Test, a group informal reading test; and for those students scoring below the 25th percentile on the Nelson-Denny Reading Test and/or scoring 50 percent or lower on the group informal reading test, an informal reading inventory is used. In addition, it is necessary to be cognizant of the reading range within the group. This reinforces multilevel instruction as well as multilevel book approach. The former calls for flexible grouping which may encompass the class as a whole group when a new topic is introduced, demonstrated, and discussed. Smaller groups are formed, dissolved, with new ones formed again in accordance with and depending upon the needs and purposes arising from the goals to be pursued and the tasks to be accomplished. Individual instruction takes place when a student encounters difficulties not encountered by other students.

Starting instruction for comprehension at the student's instructional level means to meet the student on a level where he can perform the task successfully which, in turn, assists in fulfilling belonging and esteem needs and makes him ready to attack new and more complex and difficult tasks.

Teleological Determination

To perform a task successfully implies that the task must not only lie within the student's functional ability but also must be directed toward a reachable goal. The student's teleological determination or the ability to set a goal or pupose is one of the main ingredients for effective, mature, and independent reading. Recognizing this necessity, the writer teaches "setting purposes before reading" in a systematic fashion showing the "how" and the "why" to the students.

How can a student learn to set a purpose? One might write a chapter heading or any subheading on the chalkboard and ask the students to put it in the form of a question. Students first work examples given by the instructor and then use titles taken directly from their required textbook reading.

This is meaningful learning that transfers readily to daily reading tasks. The answer to "why" one sets purposes is illustrated by having students answer the formed question. Every question requires an answer. To find this answer, the student must read to understand; i.e., to work toward fulfillment of the set purpose. When the student has learned to set purposes, the "why" acts as a psychological drive to fulfill the need to problem-solve and the reading task is no longer done for the sake of assignment or the teacher's fancy.

The Flexible Reader

After the "how" and the "why" of setting a purpose or purposes are accomplished, the student learns to adjust reading rates to different types of reading materials. Reading selections from history, geography, mathematics, chemistry, and geology are first read for comprehension. It is clear that rate and comprehension vary with the difficulty of the materials as well as with the purpose of the readers. Inductive reasoning will lead the students to realize that the reading of materials in science and mathematics necessitate a slower reading rate in order to gain greatest possible comprehension. Most important, however, is the fact that students must, out of their experiences, arrive at the conclusion that there is not one single, all-governing reading rate. They must begin to realize that reading rate is governed by proficiency in basic reading skills, background experiences, intelligence, purpose, and the organization and difficulty of the reading material. The ability of a student to adjust to the reading materials makes him a flexible reader.

Vocabulary Improvement

Functioning competently as a flexible reader demands systematic enlargement in breadth and depth of the student's vocabulary repertoire. Vocabulary improvement is another basic requirement for optimum reading comprehension. Studies emphasize that without an understanding of words, comprehension is impossible. It follows that a large vocabulary is related to high comprehension. Comprehension then depends upon the extent and the richness of the reader's meaning vocabulary which comes from his background experiences. To be certain, vocabulary should not be taught in isolation but should always be related to meaningful content. Leary, in fact, postulates that in order for the reader to achieve greatest possible comprehension he must become meaning-conscious. This skill is taught by means of word structure analysis and context clues. The former depends upon word recognition of prefixes, suffixes, and root words and on studying word origin, synonyms, and antonyms as well as word combinations and compounds. The latter, context clues, is taught by means of inference, definitions, figures of speech, tone and mood, and

comparisons and contrasts. One might instruct the student to use either cards or a notebook to write down unknown words which occur frequently in his textbooks as well as those words and phrases which are used in lectures, conversations, and in additional study or recreational reading. To be able to make use of these selected words the student must pronounce the words and associate meaning with them. Words which cause difficulty are viewed again in the meaningful setting in which they had been located in the textbooks. Possible meanings are discussed and perhaps attached to the words, and, if necessary, definitions are rechecked in the dictionary. The next step is to make the newly learned words functional, i.e., have the words applied whenever possible in daily discussions, in oral utterances, and in written exercises or in other subject matter area assignments. The more the student uses these words and integrates them into his word repertoire, the more he builds up a thorough understanding of them. To broaden and deepen these vicarious experiences gathered by exploring new meanings, the student could be requested to write and follow a personal program of recreational readings which would assist him in strengthening his ability to read the lines, to read between the lines, and to read beyond the lines.

Instructional reading levels, teleological determination, flexible reading, and vocabulary development never stand in isolation within a reading activity but must function harmoniously toward the common goal of comprehension.

The Directed Reading Lesson

How can the goal of comprehension be reached in the most economical manner while focusing on the psychological well-being of the reading student? The directed reading lesson is the answer. A directed reading lesson is a planned, purposeful and systematic procedure whereby the student reads for differing degrees of comprehension. First, the reading instructor should demonstrate to the student the procedure of a directed reading lesson. After the student has overviewed the directed reading lesson, he works through each step in order to experience the impact of each activity on comprehending intelligently the reading material under discussion. Progressive insight permits the student to conclude that all the activities inherent in each step must be thoroughly mastered before proceeding to the next succeeding step. Psychologically, it involves the student's attention and concentration as well as his planning and systematizing abilities. The directed reading lessons provide the student with a procedure which enables them to look deeper into and beyond the printed symbols.

After the student knows the objective or objectives for

the lesson as a whole, the readiness period follows in which he must generate interest in the work at hand and motivate himself if he is not already interested in and motivated toward the tasks. Since interests are learned and vary with each individual, discussion with the learner may ignite a spark of curiosity which will act as a drive toward further investigation. During the readiness period, or assignment period required reading skills as well as content materials may be discussed in hope of filling in missing background experiences. In addition, new words could be pronounced, heard, or seen and their various meanings, clarified. At last, the student sets his own purpose, writes them down for his own reference, and then enters the second activity of the directed reading lesson, silent reading.

After reading materials have been assigned in accordance with the student's instructional reading level, silent reading for meaning begins. While the student is perusing silent reading material, the reading instructor is free to observe the student's reading habits. Head movement, lip movements, finger- or pencil-pointing as well as subtle distress or frustration signals, such as frowning and glancing around, may be noted for later discussions with the individual student.

The silent reading is followed by a question and discussion period. A student's answers to vocabulary, fact, and inference questions reveal how effectively he has read for purpose as well as for differing degrees of comprehension. Questions like What did he say? What did he mean? and What evaluation can you make? denote varying degrees of comprehension. Out of the question and discussion period and accompanying teacher-student interaction there develops oral and/or silent re-reading.

Oral or silent rereading requires new purposes of a more detailed nature. Rereading serves the purpose of regaining overlooked or not clearly perceived statements of the author. Rereading also allows for the meaningful practice of scanning to locate pertinent information as well as for meaningful oral reading of the located information. Critical thinking will enter into the process to weigh the pro's and con's. This process prepares the students to explore the last phase of the directed reading lesson, the special improvement period.

To make the special improvement period meaningful, one movement must initially take place: the previously formed instructional reading groups dissolve and new groups are formed to fulfill new purposes in accordance with the students' needs. Some students (research groups) will investigate pertinent and related subject matter; others (interest groups) will broaden and deepen common interests aroused by the subject area under consideration; still others (special needs

groups) will ask to pursue special needs not shared by the rest of the class; and a few (tutorial groups) may be willing to help and assist some students in learning particular skills they are trying to learn.

In addition to these follow-up experiences, the meaningful explored activities contained in the successive steps of the directed reading lesson must be applied to a maximum number of similar learning situations so that transfer occurs.

Fulfillment In Action

Each reading aspect, with its related activities, contributes its pertinent share toward comprehension and understanding of any reading material. Prerequisite to this achievement is the understanding that the junior college student must master the various reading aspects and their related activities not only theoretically or just practicably in the sheltered atmosphere of the reading room but also outside on his own as a mature and independent reader. At this point the student, within his own capacity, is reading for the highest possible comprehension, be it for study requirements or for recreation.

When these suggested reading activities actually take place within the confinements of the reading room, then and only then, the junior college reading program with all its ramifications is fulfilling one of its major services to junior college reading students.

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